

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-20 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 HA-05 OES-07
NRC-07 ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSY-06 ARA-14 AF-10 MCT-01
/167 W

-----087800 122311Z /70

R 122110Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8539
INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
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AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, GW
SUBJECT: PREVIEW OF DGB NATIONAL CONVENTION

REF: (A) A-97, APRIL 4, 78
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SUMMARY: THE GERMAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION (DEUT-
SCHER GEWERKSCHAFTSBUND - DGB) WITH A TOTAL MEMBERSHIP
CLOSE TO 7.5 MILLION WILL HOLD ITS 11TH REGULAR NA-
TIONAL CONVENTION IN HAMBURG FROM MAY 21 TO 27. MAJOR
TOPICS FOR THE DELEGATES WILL BE THE RESTORATION OF
FULL EMPLOYMENT, JOB SECURITY, COLLECTIVE BARGAINING,

ENERGY POLICY AND EMPLOYERS' USE OF THE LOCKOUT WHICH THE DGB WANTS TO PROHIBIT. THE REELECTION OF DGB PRESIDENT VETTER AND HIS EIGHT COLLEAGUES ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD APPEARS CERTAIN. FOR THE FIRST TIME THE GERMAN POLICE UNION, WHICH WAS ADMITTED TO THE DGB AS ITS 17TH AFFILIATE IN APRIL 1978, WILL BE REPRESENTED AT THE CONVENTION. END SUMMARY.

1. THE DELEGATES WILL BE CONFRONTED WITH 389 RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCED BY DGB REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND AFFILIATED UNIONS. MANY OF THEM CONCERN PROPOSALS TO RESTORE FULL EMPLOYMENT AND TO GUARANTEE JOBS FOR EVERYONE. DISCUSSION ON A NEW BASIC PROGRAM FOR THE DGB WILL BE POSTPONED. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO PREPARE A DRAFT PROGRAM TO BE SUBMITTED TO A SPECIAL CONVENTION LATER.

2. THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL POLICY ARE RECOMMENDED BY THE RESOLUTIONS COMMISSION TO THE CONVENTION FOR APPROVAL:

A) DETENTE, DISARMAMENT AND PEACE IN THE WORLD:
THE RESOLUTION POINTS OUT THAT DETENTE SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO CONTACTS BETWEEN OFFICIALS, BUT MUST INCLUDE THE FREE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND THE FREE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION. SECURING THE PEACE IS IN THE INTEREST OF
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THE FREE AND DEMOCRATIC LABOR MOVEMENT AND MUST BE A PRIORITY GOAL OF INTERNATIONAL POLICY. THE DGB THEREFORE SUPPORTS THE EXPANSION OF EFFORTS TO IMPROVE PLANNING FOR PEACE AND TO REDUCE TENSIONS. IT APPEALS TO THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT ALL EFFORTS TOWARD WORLD-WIDE CONTROLLED DISARMAMENT. FINALLY, THE RESOLUTION CALLS FOR AN IMMEDIATE HALT TO THE ARMAMENT RACE, A FREEZE ON ARMAMENT BUDGETS IN ALL COUNTRIES AT THE PRESENT LEVEL, RENUNCIATION OF ALL NEW ARMAMENT PROJECTS IN EAST AND WEST, AND A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION BY THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT IN ALL CURRENT DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS.

B) THE NEUTRON BOMB:
THE RESOLUTION CALLS UPON THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE MEASURES TO ACHIEVE AN INTERNATIONALLY BINDING PROHIBITION OF THE NEUTRON BOMB. IT REQUESTS THE UNIONS TO OPPOSE "GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO RATIONALIZE THE EFFECTS OF THIS WEAPON SYSTEM."

C) HUMAN RIGHTS AND TRADE UNION FREEDOM:
THE RESOLUTION NOTES WITH CONCERN THE STEADILY INCREAS-

ING VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND TRADE UNION FREEDOM
IN MANY COUNTRIES. IT CONDEMNS THE VIOLATIONS OF
HUMAN RIGHTS AND TRADE UNION FREEDOM EVERYWHERE IN THE
WORLD AND CALLS ON THE DGB EXECUTIVE BOARD TO CONTINUE
STRIVING TO BRING ABOUT FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY FOR ALL
PEOPLE AND TO PURSUE EFFORTS TO OBTAIN TRADE UNION FREE-
DOM AND RIGHTS FOR WORKERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. IT
ENCOURAGES AND SUPPORTS THE ICFTU IN ITS FIGHT FOR HUMAN

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RIGHTS AND TRADE UNION FREEDOM. IT CALLS ON ALL GOVERN-

MENTS TO RECOGNIZE THE UN CONVENTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS
AND ILO AGREEMENTS ON TRADE UNION RIGHTS AND FREE-
DOMS AND TO MAKE THOSE A CENTRAL THEME OF THEIR
FOREIGN POLICY.
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D) ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION SOLIDARITY:
THE RESOLUTION REQUESTS THE DGB EXECUTIVE BOARD TO IN-
TENSIFY AND EXPAND RELATIONS WITH THE FREE TRADE UNIONS
IN THE WORLD AND INCREASE COOPERATION PARTICULARLY
WITH THE ICFTU AND THE ETUC. IN VIEW OF THE PROBLEMS
INHERENT IN THE PRESENT ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT CRISIS,
THE RESOLUTION URGES CLOSER COOPERATION WITH THE
TRADE UNIONS OF OTHER INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES IN ORDER TO
COORDINATE POLICY AND CARRY OUT JOINT ACTIONS TO SECURE
JOBS, IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS AND PAY STANDARDS OF
WORKERS AND TO ACHIEVE A FULLER DEMOCRATIZATION OF THE
ECONOMY AND THE SOCIETY. IT STRESSES THE NEED FOR IN-
CLUDING THE TRADE UNIONS IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
ON AN EQUAL LEVEL IN THE FORMULATION OF WORLD-WIDE DE-
VELOPMENT POLICY AND PLANNING.

E) OTHER RESOLUTIONS IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL
TRADE UNION POLICY URGE DGB SUPPORT THROUGH THE ICFTU
FOR THE FREE AND DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNIONS IN SPAIN. A
MOTION SPONSORED BY THE DGB YOUTH COMMITTEE ADVOCATING
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONTACTS WITH THE PORTUGUESE
(COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED)"INTERSINDICAL" WAS RECOMMENDED
BY THE RESOLUTIONS COMMISSION FOR REJECTION.

F) CHILE:
THE RESOLUTION REITERATES THE CONDEMNATION OF THE
"FASCIST DICTATORSHIP" IN CHILE AND DEMANDS FREEDOM FOR
THE POLITICAL PRISONERS THERE, FREEDOM FOR THE TRADE
UNION FEDERATION CUT, AND FREEDOM FOR THE POLITICAL
PARTIES.

G) SOUTH AFRICA:
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THE RESOLUTION URGES THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TO
RELEASE ALL ARRESTED TRADE UNIONISTS, TO GRANT UNRESTRIC-
TED TRADE UNION RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS TO THE BLACK WOR-
KERS, TO RESCIND THE RESERVATION OF CERTAIN JOBS FOR
WHITES, TO GRANT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR BLACKS IN

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE PAYMENT OF EQUAL WAGES FOR EQUAL WORK. IT CALLS ON THE FRG TO WORK TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT BY ALL SUBSIDIARIES OF GERMAN COMPANIES IN SOUTH AFRICA, TO CONSIDER THE USE OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS, AND TO INCREASE ECONOMIC AID TO NEIGHBORING AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHICH DEPEND ECONOMICALLY ON SOUTH AFRICA.

3. A NUMBER OF RESOLUTIONS DEAL WITH MANPOWER AND ECONOMIC POLICY. IN ADDITION, ONE RESOLUTION DEMANDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A "RIGHT TO A JOB" AS A BASIC RIGHT UNDER THE FRG CONSTITUTION.

A) IN THE FIELD OF MANPOWER POLICY, AN AMENDMENT OF THE 1969 MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT ACT (ARBEITSFOERDERUNGSGESETZ) IS PROPOSED WHICH WOULD EXPAND EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVES AND TRAINING PROGRAMS AND WHICH WOULD COMMIT THE FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE TO EXPAND ITS MANPOWER PROGRAMS.

B) IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC POLICY, A RESOLUTION, FORMULATED BY THE DGB EXECUTIVE BOARD, REPEATS THE FOLLOWING PROPOSALS INCLUDED IN THE DGB'S MANPOWER POLICY PROGRAM PUBLISHED LAST YEAR:

A STRATEGY TO STIMULATE GROWTH "IN FUTURE-ORIENTED INDUSTRIES" AND IN FIELDS WHICH DESERVE "SOCIAL PRIORITY";

A STRATEGY OF CONTROLLED PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH DESIGNED TO PROTECT WORKERS AGAINST THE

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"ANTI-SOCIAL RESULTS" OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE;

A STRATEGY TO ABSORB THE LABOR POOL SURPLUS THROUGH A REDUCTION OF WORKING HOURS AND A LOWERING OF THE RETIREMENT AGE.

THE RESOLUTION ALSO CALLS FOR A REGULAR GOVERNMENT REPORT ON STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE ECONOMY TO BE PREPARED BY THE COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS.

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IN ADDITION, EMPLOYERS ARE REQUESTED TO BASE FUTURE
INVESTMENT PROJECTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS ON AN
INTEGRATED REGIONAL AND INDUSTRY-WIDE BASIS WITH PRIORI-
TY TO SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS OVER FINANCIAL ONES IN
THE DECISION PROCESS.
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C) IN THE PUBLIC POLICY SECTOR, A SERIES OF RESOLU-
TIONS CALL FOR AN EXPANSION OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
AND MORE LIBERAL MONETARY AND TAX MEASURES. SUBSIDIES
TO BUSINESS SHOULD BE LINKED TO THE CREATION OF NEW

JOB UNDER REGIONAL "STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS".
GOVERNMENT DEFICIT SPENDING SHOULD BE INCREASED.

D) ON THE SUBJECT OF INCOME TAXES, RESOLUTIONS OPPOSE
ANY TAX CUTS FAVORING EMPLOYERS, BUT ADVOCATE A REFORM
OF THE INCOME TAX SCHEDULE IN FAVOR OF WORKERS.

4. IN THE FIELD OF LABOR LAW, VARIOUS RESOLUTIONS DEMAND LEGISLATION TO PROHIBIT THE EMPLOYERS' RIGHT TO LOCKOUT, TO PREVENT LABOR COURTS FROM GRANTING INJUNCTIONS AGAINST STRIKES, AND TO END "ARBITRARY DISMISSALS AND ENDLESS DAMAGE COMPENSATION CLAIMS AGAINST WORKERS INVOLVED IN SPONTANEOUS WALKOUTS." OTHER RESOLUTIONS CALL FOR NEW LEGISLATION TO STRENGTHEN THE POSITION OF THE INDIVIDUAL WORKER VIS-A-VIS MANAGEMENT IN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS AND TO INCREASE THE PROTECTION OF WORKERS AGAINST TERMINATIONS. OTHER RESOLUTIONS LOOK TO AN AMENDMENT OF THE 1938 LAW ON WORKING HOURS (ARBEITSZEITORDNUNG) TO LEGALLY ESTABLISH THE 40-HOUR WEEK AS THE REGULAR STANDARD WORKWEEK.

5. ON THE SUBJECT OF CODETERMINATION, RESOLUTIONS CALL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GENUINE PARITY ON COMPANY BOARDS OF SUPERVISORS IN LINE WITH THE 1951 COAL-STEEL CODETERMINATION LAW, ELIMINATION OF MANAGERIAL EMPLOYEES REPRESENTED AS A SEPARATE GROUP, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKER NOMINATED LABOR (INDUSTRIAL UNCLASSIFIED

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RELATIONS) DIRECTORS. FURTHERMORE, SEVERAL RESOLUTIONS REPEAT PREVIOUS DEMANDS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MANAGEMENT-LABOR "ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCILS" AT THE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL (UEBERBETRIEBLICHE MITBESTIMMUNG).

6. IN A SOMEWHAT SURPRISING DECLARATION OF CONCERN FORMULATED AS A RESOLUTION, THE DGB EXECUTIVE BOARD CALLS ATTENTION TO "ANTI-UNION TENDENCIES" IN THE FRG. IT REFERS TO RECKLESS ALLEGATIONS THAT THE COUNTRY IS IN DANGER OF BECOMING A "TRADE UNION STATE", INSINUATIONS THAT A SINISTER ALLIANCE EXISTS BETWEEN THE UNIONS AND THE SPD, THE "UNFOUNDED ASSERTION" BY EMPLOYERS THAT HIGHER WAGES FEED UNEMPLOYMENT, AND SUGGESTIONS THAT LEGISLATION TO RESTRICT UNIONS IS NEEDED.

7. COMMENT: THE RESOLUTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL POLICY ARE PRETTY STANDARD FARE FOR A DGB CONVENTION. MISSING THIS YEAR IS ANY RESOLUTION ON EAST-WEST EXCHANGES AL-

THOUGH THERE IS ONE SUPPORTING EXPANSION OF CONTACTS
WITH DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNIONS. THERE IS NO MENTION OF
SUPPORT FOR FRG DEFENSE POLICY, NATO OR THE BUNDESWEHR
ALTHOUGH CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT AND FORMER DEFENSE MINISTER
GEORG LEBER, A FORMER UNION PRESIDENT, HAVE TRIED HARD
TO ENLIST DGB PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE DEFENSE EFFORTS
OF THE FRG.

RESOLUTIONS IN THE ECONOMIC AND MANPOWER CATEGORIES
REFLECT THE RANGE OF SOLUTIONS WHICH THE UNIONS FEEL
ARE MOST APPROPRIATE FOR THE URGENT PROBLEMS FACING
THE COUNTRY AT THIS TIME. THEY ARE AWARE, OF COURSE,
THAT ON MANY OF THESE ISSUES THEIR VIEW OF THE PROBLEMS
AND THE ANSWERS IS NOT SHARED BY THE GOVERNMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, LABOR UNIONS, MEETINGS, LABOR POLICY LINE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BONN08905
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780203-0039
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780566/aaaacdwt.tel
Line Count: 400
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b8e616a0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 8
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2712195
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PREVIEW OF DGB NATIONAL CONVENTION
TAGS: ELAB, GE
To: STATE USEEC
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b8e616a0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014